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Annapolis Conservancy Board

July 17, 2014

The Annapolis Conservancy Board (ACB) of the City of Annapolis held its regular meeting on July 17, 2014, at the Roger "Pip" Moyer Recreation Center. **Chair** Jennings called the meeting to order at 5:36pm.

Present: **Chair** Jennings, Chapman

Absent: Baldwin, Fogle, Lippert, Clift

Staff: Savidge-Board Liaison

Guests: Chris Moore-Landscape Architect (Biohabitats, Inc.), Rick Leader-Director (Scenic Rivers Land Trust), Joe Berg-Senior Ecologist (Biohabitats, Inc.), Mel Wilkins-(Spa Creek Conservancy)

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 8, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Chapman moved approval of the May 8, 2014 meeting minutes as written. **Chair** Jennings seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote of 2-0.

III. GUEST SPEAKERS

a. South Cherry Grove Avenue Easement Stream Restoration – Spa Creek Conservancy

Chair Jennings explained that the ACB manages most of the easements within City limits however there are different landowners that own the easements but the City does own some. In this instance, the Scenic River Land Trust owns this particular easement so any impacts to the easement must be approved by them. Mr. Leader said that he had visited the site to look at its current condition, and spoke with a neighbor. The Spa Creek Conservancy has hired Biohabitats, Inc. to develop plans for a restoration project in the stream that will include this easement parcel.

Mr. Berg explained that the project goals for the Spa Creek Restoration Project are to reduce in-stream erosion; improve aquatic wetlands; improve water quality; minimize impact from restoration construction; and improve conditions for adjacent homeowners. He explained that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has funded both the design and construction of this project. He briefly discussed the easement area and the three design options being explored. He explained that this project is the early stages of the project, however it is expected that the project will have minimal changes or impacts to the easement. **Chair** Jennings expressed interest in ensuring that any legal restrictions on the easement are followed. Mr. Leader explained that the easement has very few restrictions on it, and that an ecological restoration would certainly be acceptable.

Mr. Wilkins provided an in depth background on the Spa Creek Conservancy indicating that the Conservancy was founded in 2004 and have received approximately \$2.5M in grants funding over the past ten years. The Conservancy has been installing bio-retention projects and living shorelines, and has a set of master plans under different categories such as restoration, retrofits, and also educational programs in the communities. The Conservancy is an all volunteer organization and has been successful in securing grant funds. The Conservancy also formed the Spa Creek Stewardship program

using Chesapeake Bay Trust funds. He concluded by discussing some of the ongoing projects that the Conservancy is working on including the proposal for Hawkins Cove. **Chair** Jennings said that the Annapolis Conservancy Board also manages an easement in the Cove, and would be very interested in being involved in any work to be done there. Mr. Wilkins agreed to keep the Board informed as Hawkins Cove moves forward.

Further discussion of the project at the South Cherry Grove Easement revealed that the project will cross two or three other easements along the Spa Creek headwaters that the Board also manages. These easements are located next to the City Public Works building, at the Chesapeake Children's Museum (owned by Spa Creek Conservancy), and along Silopanna Drive. **Chair** Jennings and Mr. Savidge agreed to try to pull the easement deeds for the additional properties for the Spa Creek Conservancy and Biohabitats to use as they proceed with the restoration design.

Chair Jennings clarified that the ACB would like to be informed about any impacts to vegetation at the easement.

Mr. Leader provided a letter of support for the Spa Creek Restoration Project from the Scenic River Land Trust and only requested to be kept informed on the project status. **Chair** Jennings asked if the Annapolis Conservancy Board would need to provide a similar letter. The group decided that it was not necessary since the easement owner (Scenic Rivers Land Trust) had given it's approval.

IV OLD BUSINESS

a. 2013 Easement Inspections

There were no updates on the 2013 Easement Inspections.

b. Village Greens Update

Chair Jennings explained that at a past meeting that Mr. Elson suggested that the ACB solicit verification that the easement has been legally expunged. Mr. Savidge noted that Mr. Elson believes that a letter would be appropriate. **Chair** Jennings inquired as to whether the Law Office will draft the letter and Mr. Savidge agreed to check into the matter as well as include **Chair** Jennings on the communication.

c. Legal Updates

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with County- Programmed Open Space Funding

Mr. Savidge reported that the MOU is still with the City's Law Office and agreed to follow up with Mr. Woodward, Acting City Manager, on the status. **Chair** Jennings also agreed to inquire regarding the status. She also suggested asking Mr. Woodward about handing the MOU off to the individuals who are acting in the roles of Law Office and Recreation and Parks.

2. Schubert Property

Chair Jennings reported that her discussion with Mr. Lomax was that he needs to review the agreement. She agreed to follow up with him.

3. Vytar Easement

There was a brief discussion regarding who owns the Vytar easement. **Chair** Jennings thought that the City owns both the property and the easement, but Mr. Chapman said that would be a conflict of interest to have the same property owner and easement owner. The ACB agreed to follow up on verification of easement ownership. The next steps to follow up with previous efforts to examine liability issues for a formal trail are to invite Mr. Sam Brice to tour the site to view the connections to Truxtun Park and determine property ownership.

c. August Woods Downed Tree

Chair Jennings noted that the August Woods HOA Manager would like to meet on site to get permission to remove a tree that fell down inside the easement boundary. She clarified that she would like to have some of the existing invasives removed while they are doing work in the easement. Mr. Savidge will schedule a meeting with the HOA Manager and **Chair** Jennings will send him some suggested dates.

d. Board Vacancies

Mr. Chapman received a ruling from the Ethics Commission that indicated that DNR employees cannot serve on Boards. He was also informed that it doesn't apply because he is an ex-officio seat. He will continue to check into the matter to report at the next meeting. **Chair** Jennings explained that the Mr. Murphy's application is still in the Mayor's office and agreed to follow up on the status. Mr. Savidge reported that Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Fogle's terms are due to expire. **Chair** Jennings will contact both regarding their term expiring to solicit interest in remaining on the Board.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

a. Review of Minutes of Other Environmental Boards

The minutes of other Boards will be distributed to the members via email.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2014 Easement Inspection Assignments

The ACB deferred this agenda item to its September 11, 2014 meeting.

B. Future Guest Speaker

Chair Jennings attended the AEC July 2, 2014 meeting where there was a guest speaker, Alex Pline of Complete Streets. Mr. Pline discussed bicycle connections and Chair Jennings mentioned to him the Board's involvement in trying to create a bicycle connection at Post Haste, which ultimately failed due to significant liability issues associated with traffic use of the parking lot. She believes that it would be good to invite Mr. Pline to a meeting to discuss other similar connections. She also thought we should ensure that Mr. Elson is present for the discussion so he can explain the Post Haste liability issues and how it might influence moving forward with other bicycle connections.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Mr. Chapman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm. **Chair** Jennings seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote 2-0.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2014 at 5:30pm at Pip Moyer Recreation Center.

Tami Hook, Recorder